

Culturally Sensitive Practice

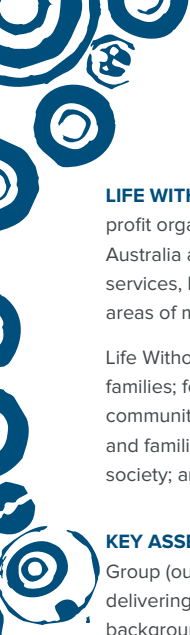
IN OUT OF HOME CARE

A Good Practice Guide to supporting children & young people from culturally & linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in Out Of Home Care



WE
LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS
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LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS has grown from humble beginnings into one of the most significant not-for-profit organisations in Australia, providing care and support services to almost 6000 clients across Australia and in New Zealand. Our services include family support and out-of-home care, disability services, home and community care and support to refugees and asylum seekers. We also work in the areas of mental health, homelessness and youth justice.

Life Without Barriers' family support and out-of-home care services include support to vulnerable families; foster and residential care for children and young people; and child care services in remote communities. Our support to refugees and asylum seekers service includes support for young people and families in community detention; care and accommodation for young people settling into Australian society; and complex case support.

KEY ASSETS (KA) is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation who along with the Core Assets Group (our parent company in the United Kingdom) has a combined experience of over 20 years of delivering intensive out-of-home care fostering services to children and young people from diverse backgrounds across four continents. The success of our approach is a belief that all children and young people in out-of home care deserve the best opportunity to achieve their full potential and those caring for them need to be supported and valued to do this. Key Assets and Core Assets also provides a range of other services including Edge of Care, Parent and Child Placements, Disability Support, Kinship Care, Learning and Organisational Development.

Our Framework, which we call Team Parenting™ is rooted and underpinned by theories associated with child development, culture, attachment and trauma. It is our solid belief that even the most complex of children, with the right inputs and supports, can both live and thrive in family based care and transition to the next stage of their life, whether restoration to family, another placement or transition to adulthood with the skills to succeed.

PEAKCARE QUEENSLAND is a Queensland child protection peak body. PeakCare has 60 member agencies, which are a mix of small, medium and large, local and state-wide, mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-government organisations that provide family support, child protection, and out-of-home care services (eg. foster and kinship care, residential care) to children and young people who are at risk of entry to, or in, the statutory child protection system and their families. PeakCare has an additional 16 members who are individuals and other entities supportive of PeakCare's policy platform relating to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and the support of their families.

JK DIVERSITY CONSULTANTS Specialist Social Worker working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. Services offered: Policy, Advocacy, Research, Evaluation, Psy-Social Assessments and Training for NGO's, Government, Business and community groups.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Good Practice Guide to supporting children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in Out Of Home Care.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR	3
HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE	4
GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS	5
INTRODUCTION	6
WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE TELL US ABOUT THE ISSUES FACING CALD CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN OOHc?	9
SUPPORTING FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARERS	13
EXPERIENCES OF MIGRANT, REFUGEE & UHM YOUNG PEOPLE IN OOHc	14
MIGRANT YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE	14
REFUGEE YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE	17
UNACCOMPANIED HUMANITARIAN MINORS IN CARE	21
CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PRACTICE	22
AWARENESS	22
KNOWLEDGE	22
UNDERSTANDING ETHNIC CULTURE	24
FACTORS INFLUENCING ETHNIC CULTURE	25
CULTURAL PRACTICE SKILLS	29
SUPPORTING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND BELONGING – WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?	30
APPENDIX A: CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN CHECKLIST (DETAILED)	31
APPENDIX B: CHILD FOCUSED CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN	37
APPENDIX C: CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN – IDENTITY ACTIVITY	38
APPENDIX D: CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN CHECKLIST (SIMPLIFIED VERSION)	39
RESOURCES	40
REFERENCES	41

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been developed as a practice guide for anyone working with children and young people from CALD backgrounds and is targeted towards practitioners employed in the child and family welfare sector, child protection system, out-of-home care, foster and kinship carer agencies, residential youth workers, policy and program officers. This practice guide builds on an earlier publication by the author (Kaur, 2012) 'Cultural Diversity and Child Protection: A review of the Australian research on the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and refugee children and families'. This practice guide will examine best practices in supporting culturally diverse children and young people in Out of Home Care (OOHC). In addition young care leavers from CALD backgrounds, foster carers and case managers were consulted as part of the development of this guide.

This resource can be used in various ways and it may help you to:

- Understand culturally sensitive practice
- Improve service planning for CALD children and young people in OOHC
- Develop strategies on cultural support plans and culturally matched placements.

As an accompaniment to this guide, JK Diversity Consultants has developed the following two training workshops which have been delivered across Australia and is endorsed by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) for continuing professional development credit points:

- 'Working with CALD and refugee communities in child and family welfare setting'
- 'Developing Cultural Competence in Out-of-Home Care'.

For further information please contact: support@jkdiversityconsultants.com.au

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

CALD = Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

NESB = Non-English Speaking Background

CPS = Child Protection System

OOHC = Out-of-Home Care

UHM = Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor (visa granted)

UAM = Unaccompanied Minors (visa not yet granted)

UNCROC = United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Background Paper: <http://goo.gl/5w13qN>

Kaur, J. (2012) 'Cultural Diversity and Child Protection'

A review of the Australian research on the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and refugee children and families.

TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

MIGRANT

A person who has left their country of origin voluntarily to seek a better life for a range of personal and economic reasons. They have made the choice to leave, had the chance to plan and prepare for migration and generally can return at any time if they wish¹.

REFUGEE

The UN legal definition of a refugee is a person “owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, political opinion, is outside their country of his nationality, and is unable to or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (1951 UN Convention relating to the status of Refugees). Australia is signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Refugee and is one of few countries across the globe which partakes in the permanent resettlement program of refugees through the Humanitarian Program.

ASYLUM SEEKER

The UNHCR describes an asylum seeker as an individual who is seeking international protection: ‘In countries with discrete refugee assessment procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim for protection has not been decided by the country in which she or he has submitted their claim. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognised as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum seeker’ (Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Master Glossary of Terms, June 2006). In the Australian context, an asylum seeker is an applicant seeking a protection visa but has not had their application for refugee status finally decided (for more detailed information see Department of Immigration and Border Protection Fact sheet on seeking asylum)².

UHM

Children and young people under the age of 18 years, who are refugees and arrive in Australia without their parents, are called Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHMs). UHMs who are under the age of 18 years and have no suitable relative in Australia to care for them become ‘wards’ and are under guardianship of the Minister for the Department of Immigration and Border Protection³.

Practice Tip: It is important to be aware of the immigration status of the child/young person, as this will impact on what services they are eligible for and can access. For example, migrants who arrive in Australia under the Migration Program (e.g. family visa, skilled visa, student or spousal visa's) are not eligible for settlement support services. New Zealand migrants who come under the Trans Tasman Treaty are also in-eligible for some social security benefits and various social welfare services.

¹Centre for Multicultural Youth, Information sheet Refugee and CALD young people: Definitions: <http://goo.gl/bafYhK>

²Fact Sheet 61- Seeking Protection within Australia (DIBP): <http://goo.gl/KBdeod>

³Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia) Policy Paper: Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHMs) in Australia: an overview of national support arrangements and key emerging issues (2012): <http://goo.gl/DJMRqB>

INTRODUCTION

Australia is a multicultural society with a rich diversity of culture, languages, religions and ethnicities. As at 30 June 2013, there has been an increase in the overseas born population to 6 million of the Estimated Resident Population (22,340 million)⁴. There are more than 260 languages spoken in Australia (including Indigenous languages). The most common languages (other than English) spoken at home were: Mandarin, Italian, Arabic, Cantonese and Greek. Australia's permanent migration program for 2012-13 is set at 190,000 places, with 68% allocated to the skilled stream and 32% to the family stream migrants. The top 10 source countries for overseas born population included: China, New Zealand, India, United Kingdom, Philippines, South Africa, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Korea. The Refugee Humanitarian program for 2012-13 has been set at 13,750 visa (DIBP, 2013)⁵. There are also some 598,000 New Zealand temporary residents living in Australia under special arrangements introduced for New Zealand citizens in 2001 (Trans Tasman Treaty). In Queensland, the second largest overseas born population is from New Zealand (192,037), a large proportion is from Pacific Islander backgrounds which include: Maori, Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands, Niueans, Fijian and Tokelauan. Government at both Commonwealth and State levels have developed multicultural policy frameworks, which aim to address the needs of migrants and refugees who settle in Australia.

The following table is replicated from ABS Migration Australia: State and Territory Composition of Country of Birth (ABS 2011)⁶ is a useful indicator on the population demographics across Australia:

	Estimated Resident Population (million)	NSW	Vic	QLD	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT
Australia	16,321.8	5,175.4	3,948.1	3,471.5	1,250.7	1,566.9	447.3	187.7	272.0
Overseas Born	6,018.2	2,043.1	1,589.8	1,005.3	388.9	786.5	64.2	43.6	96.0
Total Estimated Resident Population	22,340.0	7,218.5	5,537.8	4,476.8	1,639.6	2,353.4	511.5	231.3	368.00

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In 1991, Australia ratified the UN treaty 'Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC)'⁷, in relation to children who experience child abuse and are from CALD backgrounds, the following articles of the UNCROC are especially relevant:

- Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect
- Article 14: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Article 30: Right to practice own religion and culture for Indigenous and minority children.

The States and Territory Governments are bound by the UNCROC and have incorporated the UNCROC obligations into their relevant child protection legislation. In April 2012, the Australian Government announced the establishment role of the National Children's Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission. The primary functions of this role will be to monitor and report annually on the human rights of children in Australia and ensure the voices of children and young people are included in the development of Commonwealth Government policies and programs (p7 Children's Rights Report, 2013)⁸.

⁴ABS 3412.0-Migration Australia 2011-12 and 2012-13: <http://goo.gl/xxX2L4>

⁵Factsheet 20-Migration Programme Planning Levels: <http://goo.gl/T6m8V4>

⁶ABS 3412.0 Migration Australia 2011-12 and 2012-13, State & Territory composition: <http://goo.gl/SBUqbs>

⁷Child Rights Australia NGO Report: <http://goo.gl/ZD2B7N>

⁸Children's Rights Report (2013) Australian Human Rights Commission: <http://goo.gl/8DZAaj>

NATIONAL DATA ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OOHC

There are approximately 5.1 million children in Australia (as reported in Children's Rights Report 2013), with:

- 1.5 million in their infancy (early childhood aged 0-4 years)
- 2.2 million in primary school (aged 5 to 12 years)
- 1.4 million adolescents (aged 13 to 17 years).

Currently across Australia the exact number of children and young people from CALD backgrounds involved with the child protection system and OOHC is unknown. There are 39,621 children and young people in OOHC in Australia, of which 13,299 identify as Aboriginal [AIHW 2013]. The Children's Rights Report (2013) has made the following relevant 'Recommendation 5: The Australian Government establishes relevant data holdings and analytics covering all the key domains of children's rights outlined in the CROC, including comparable data across jurisdictions, which the National Children's Commissioner can use to monitor the enjoyment and exercise of human rights by children in Australia' (p10).

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION FRAMEWORK 2009-2020

In 2009, all state and territory governments endorsed the National Child Protection Framework 2009-2020⁹. As part of this framework, a National Research Audit was undertaken, which identified that 'there is limited research regarding cultural issues within statutory child protection services in Australia' and proposed that future research priority should focus on families from CALD backgrounds (McDonald et al, 2011, p38-39). In 2012 the author was commissioned to undertake research literature review on the needs of CALD and refugee children and families in the Australian Child Protection System (CPS). This report is the first publication of its kind to review the available Australian research and established 'baseline knowledge' for policymakers, legal practitioners and researchers and proposed a number of recommendations. The report is published online: (Kaur 2012) 'Cultural Diversity & Child Protection' report¹⁰. The literature review identified there has been limited research in Australia which has examined the needs of CALD, refugee and UHM children and young people in OOHC (Kaur, 2012, p7-8). The review made 7 recommendations to all state and territory child protection authorities and Recommendation 5 is relevant to this Practice Guide:

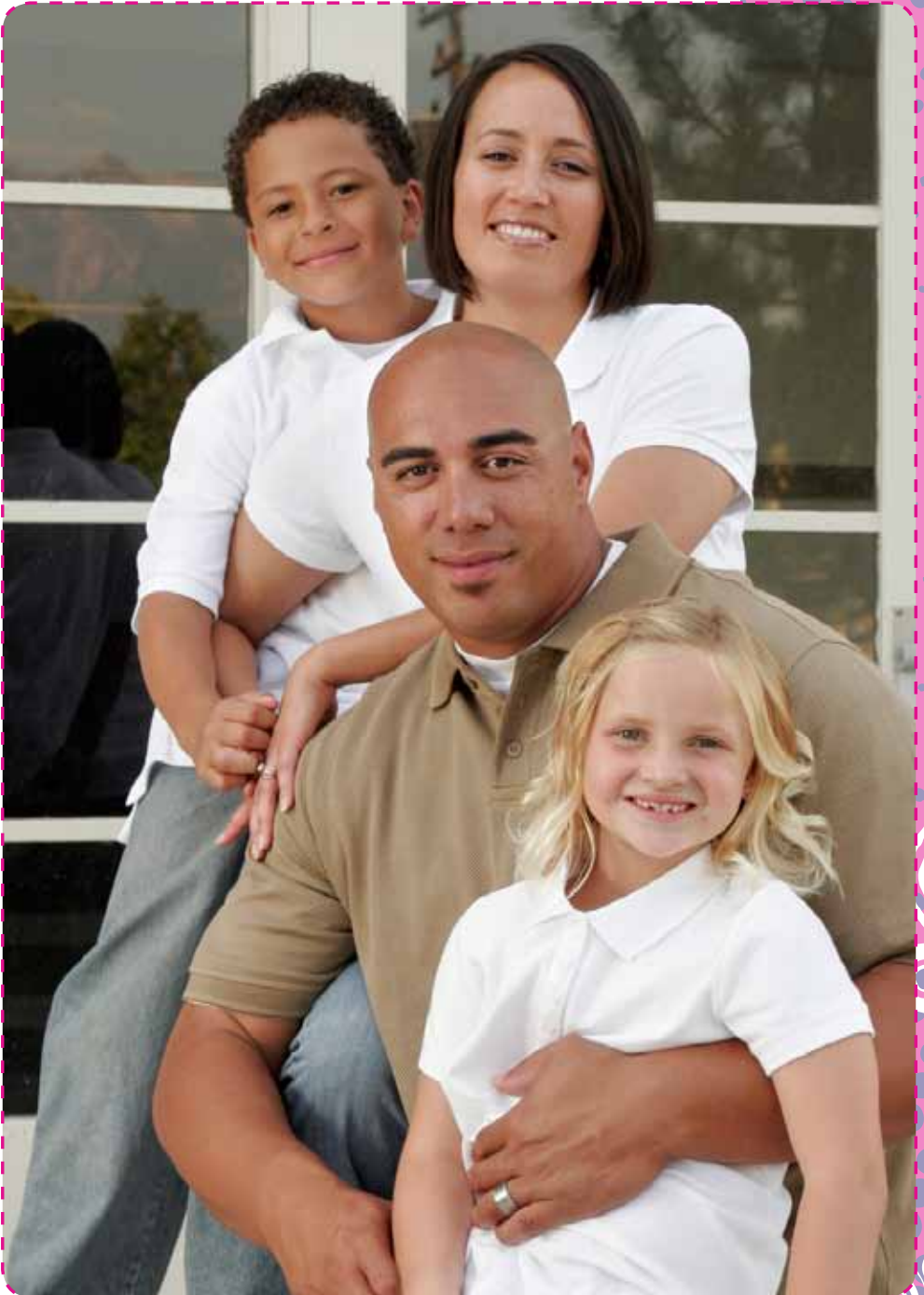
Recommendation 5: 'Departments to develop 'culturally responsive' service models for children and families from CALD and Refugee backgrounds, these categories include:

- Recruitment and retention of culturally diverse child protection workforce and bi-cultural staff
- Development of Interpreter guidelines and training on the use of interpreters for frontline child protection practitioners
- Recruitment strategies of foster and kinship carers from CALD and Refugee backgrounds
- Development of Practice Guidelines for 'Working with CALD and Refugee families', and
- Development of Cultural Support plans for CALD and Refugee children and young people who are placed in OOHC (p8)'.

This practice guide aims to address this gap & provide a resource to practitioners working with children & young people in OOHC who are from CALD or Refugee backgrounds.

⁹National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020: <http://goo.gl/qBRP9m>

¹⁰Kaur, J, (2012) Cultural Diversity & Child Protection: <http://goo.gl/r3Mce3>



WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE TELL US ABOUT THE ISSUES FACING CALD CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN OOHHC?

"The national and state-based research on the needs of CALD children in the Child Protection System is nascent but limited...similarly the international literature is relatively scant", Dr Pooja Sawrikar, (2009, p27).

AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

The literature review of the Australian research on CALD and refugee children and families (Kaur, 2012) identified 3 preliminary small exploratory studies undertaken by: Chuan and Flynn 2006; Burke and Paxman 2008 and Moss 2011, of CALD and refugee children and young people in OOHHC. A summary of the key findings from these studies is outlined below:

Chuan & Flynn (2006) were commissioned by Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) to undertake small exploratory study into the needs of CALD children and young people in OOHHC in NSW. The study included interviewing (n=11) caseworkers employed in OOHHC agencies. The key themes from this study identified: a need for individualised planning to meet cultural needs, matching of CALD children and young people with carers and staff from similar backgrounds, agency & systemic implications.

Burke & Paxman (2008) was commissioned by NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) and was a small exploratory study on children and young people from Arabic speaking and Vietnamese background. The study interviewed (n=11 caseworkers) and undertook 28 case file reviews. The study found through interviews and file reviews that caseworkers did consider the cultural background of children when placing them in OOHHC. The general process of OOHHC of CALD children and young people had the following priorities in relation to culture:

1. kinship
2. finding a culturally matched carer and
3. ensuring culturally appropriate strategies for placement where there is not a cultural matched placement.

This study identified the following difficulties affecting casework practice with CALD families:

- Lack of multicultural carers and caseworkers
- Lack of CALD specific carer training and resources (translated material)
- Need for more cultural awareness education through professional development for caseworkers.

In 2007, the Multicultural Services Unit (NSW Department of Family and Community Services) conducted a data audit of NSW child protection system which indicated that about 15% of children come from families where a language other than English is spoken at home (Sawrikar and Katz, 2014, p2). Since that audit the NSW Department of Family and Community Services has funded 3 year research project (Dr Pooja Sawrikar), developed policies and provided funding for Multicultural Out-of-Home Care tender to Settlement Services International in 2012".

¹Settlement Services International: Multicultural Foster Care Services: <http://goo.gl/d06A0v>

From 2007 to 2010, Dr Pooja Sawrikar was commissioned by the NSW CPS to undertake a large 3 year study which explored the needs of CALD children and families who came to the attention of NSW CPS. There were three stages to this study: stage 1: literature review; stage 2: case file reviews; and stage 3: qualitative interviews which covered a range of topics including cultural norms on parenting and family functioning, CALD representation and service provision in the CPS, cross cultural service provision, ethnically matching CALD families and case workers, the use of interpreters, examples of cultural and non-cultural in/appropriate practice, barriers to culturally appropriate practice and suggestions for improving culturally appropriate practice (Sawrikar, 2013, p323). Some of the key findings and implications from Dr Pooja Sawrikar study for CALD children and young people in OOHC include:

- In stage 2: of this study of 120 random case files of four CALD groups was examined (e.g. Chinese, Lebanese, Pacific Islander [Samoan and Tongan] and Vietnamese) along with two reference groups: Anglo-Saxon and Indigenous). The study found that physical abuse was the most common primary type of harm/abuse among the four CALD groups in comparison to the reference groups. Sawrikar & Katz (2014) argues that this may be 'related to cultural norms surrounding physical discipline, specifically that it is seen as culturally acceptable' (p9).
- Other cultural norms related to collectivism and gender issues were identified: 'boys and girls received differential treatment in the way they are raised or culturally sanctioned power differences between men and women' (p12).
- Issues around privacy, where many CALD families 'concerned about keeping family matters private to protect family name, which is common in collectivist cultures'.
- The study revealed that key factors around migratory issues were around: language barriers and interpreter usage; lack of awareness of child protection laws and the system; fear of authority; and lack of family support or social isolation (p13).
- The case file reviews revealed that 'Intergenerational conflict as a result of acculturation and financial issues as result of migration stress, were also key factors impacting on CALD families' (p13).
- There were five main 'family strengths' identified for CALD families, including:
 1. willingness to engage with child protection authorities
 2. acknowledging the availability of extended family and community support
 3. preservation of cultural heritage ('such efforts are an important source of strength because they offer a sense of belonging to individuals and groups that may feel socially excluded from the mainstream' p15)
 4. Resilience and
 5. Display of secure attachment behaviours among ethnic minority children (p15).

In the study by Moss (2009) she explored the cultural identity for children in OOHC in Queensland. Her study was predominantly focused on Indigenous children and involved (n=20) children and (n=11) caseworkers. The sample included children from inter-racial backgrounds (e.g. Anglo-Afro, Anglo-Dutch and Chinese). Those children from interracial backgrounds who were in OOHC displayed identity confusion and self esteem issues, as consequence of coming into care.

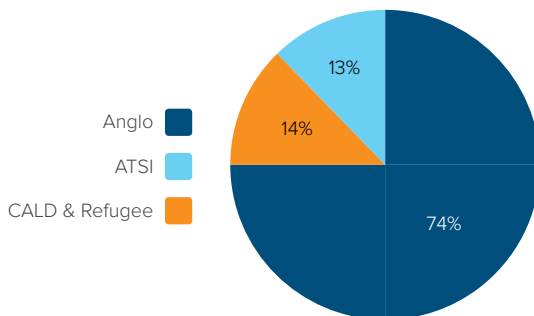
SCOPING STUDY ON CALD & REFUGEE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE IN OOHc IN VICTORIA

In 2011, the author was commissioned to undertake a scoping research study¹² to capture data on the number of CALD and refugee children in OOHc across Victoria as at 31st December 2011. A survey was sent to the funded Community Service Organisations (CSO) which provided OOHc services (foster care, residential and kinship care programs). A total of 19 CSOs completed the survey from across 8 regions. The data sample identified a total number of 2,053 children and young people across the services, which is approximately 20% of the total population of children and young people in OOHc (n=6,735).

The graph below illustrates the cultural demographics of the sample: Anglo-Australia (n=1,515); Aboriginal (n=258); CALD (n=250); and Refugee (n=30). Upon closer examination there would appear to be more children and young people from refugee background, however agencies identified them from their ethnic background instead of 'refugee' background (e.g. Sudanese, Dinka). The study also does not examine the overlap between sample groups of Aboriginal children and children from CALD or refugee backgrounds, where the child may have mixed heritage, e.g. one parent is from Aboriginal background and the other parent is an immigrant.

This data clearly shows that approximately 14% of the children and young people in OOHc are from CALD and refugee backgrounds (combined total n=280) and is actually higher than the number of Aboriginal children and young people in this sample. It is critical for child protection departments to commence collecting ethnic data of children and young people from CALD and refugee backgrounds entering OOHc to ensure that there is not an over-representation of certain cultural groups.

**CULTURAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF VICTORIAN CHILDREN
& YOUNG PEOPLE IN OOHc (2012)**



¹²Scoping Research study on number of CALD and refugee children & young people in OOHc in Victoria (2012): <http://goo.gl/zwgBEu>

CREATE REPORT CARD 2013

More recently the CREATE Foundation published its annual Report Card 2013, in which they interviewed a total of n=1,069 children and young people across Australia (except Western Australia). Their sample included:

- Anglo-Australian =704
- Indigenous = 309
- Other = 56 (the report did not specify whether this group was from CALD background).

Personal History & Culture (p46) Figure 49, shows that difference in 3 cultural groups and extent of knowledge about why they have been placed in care (with Indigenous children and young people having less information in comparison to other groups). Only the Indigenous group were asked the question on: 'how well connected they felt with their culture or cultural community (p49) and this was not extended to 'Other cultural group'. Further analysis of 'Other cultural group' has not been undertaken.

In 2012 the author was commissioned by the Create Foundation to develop and prepare a 'Go Your Own Way Info Kit' for young people transitioning from Out of Home Care. The Info kit was developed to support Standard 13 of the National Standards for out-of-home care that says, *Children and young people have a transition from care plan commencing at 15 years old which details support to be provided after leaving care.*

The Info Kit is a practical tool to help young people and their caseworkers develop a plan for the young person's transition to independence. The workbook incorporates planning checklists, general information, and contact details for support that young people may need as they become more independent.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Go Your Own Way Info Kit (2012): <http://goo.gl/WTgts5>

¹³CREATE Report Card (2013): <http://goo.gl/oF1Cy3>

SUPPORTING FOSTER & KINSHIP CARERS

To date, there has been no empirical Australian research examining practices and policies that address the needs of both CALD and refugee children and young people who are in the OOHc system (Bromfield and Osborn, 2007), and highlighted again in National Research Audit (McDonald et al 2011). However based on the preliminary studies, there is growing recognition that child protection departments need to prioritise and develop a policy framework for ensuring 'culturally matched placements' for children and young people from CALD and refugee backgrounds.

The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020, in the second Action Plan 2012-2015¹⁴ has identified the need to 'enhance the evidence base' and develop strategies to meet the needs of CALD communities. Under 'Supporting Carers' there is an Action 3: 'Expand training and support for grandparents and kinship carers, including Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Kinship carers' (p23). In 2013, Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) developed a guide for foster and kinship carers: 'Maintaining culture: helping a child retain their cultural connections and identity', which provides useful information for foster/kinship carers on:

- the importance of understanding culture
- identifying strategies to support and maintain a child's culture and
- strategies to assist a child with prejudice and discrimination.

USEFUL RESOURCES

In 2013, Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) has developed the following guide for foster carers: **Maintaining culture: helping a child retain their cultural connections and identity**: <http://goo.gl/nlUYm0>



¹⁴The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, second Action Plan 2012-2015: <http://goo.gl/9IENtC>

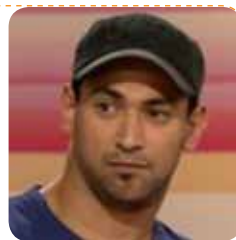
EXPERIENCES OF MIGRANT, REFUGEE & UHM YOUNG PEOPLE IN OOHC

In developing this practice guide, the author was able to interview some CALD and refugee young care leavers who have a in-care experience and been placed in OOHC. To protect their identities, the majority of the case studies are de-identified and their actual names are not used with the exception of Youssif who has been on SBS television and gave permission to use his story and image.

MIGRANT YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Youssif – a young person, Muslim and care leaver

Youssif was interviewed on SBS Insight (2011) on Removing Kids:
<http://goo.gl/dFLx9r>



Youssif is 30 years old and from a Lebanese Muslim background living in Victoria. In 2011 he was interviewed on SBS Insight and shared his experience of coming into the foster care system. Youssif first came into care when he was 6 years due to harsh physical discipline by his father, at that time his parents was separated and there were custody issues. When he first came into care he was placed with his siblings and with Anglo-Australian carers and then he was returned to his mother. He wanted to stay with his father and moved in with him. When he was 10 years old, his father got angry and “beat him” and his sister contacted the Department and they were removed from their father’s care. From the age of 9 to 11 years, Youssif was placed with Anglo-Australian foster carers; he was never placed with Muslim foster carers. He was separated from his 8 siblings and felt isolated: “On his own and cut off from his eight siblings”. Youssif struggled at school as he was bullied and treated differently by other kids due to him “being in foster care” and his friends would “pity him”. When he was growing up he did not like the fact that he was ‘Lebanese Muslim’ and would get into arguments with his friends and get into trouble in local neighbourhood. He felt that “judgments were being made about him” without people knowing him. Youssif believes his parents’ feelings were never considered in the child protection system and case planning. He thinks caseworkers should give more consideration to young peoples’ cultural identity backgrounds when choosing placements. Youssif has faced many challenges in his cultural identity, sense of belonging and maintaining connections with his birth family and siblings. He has not spoken to his father in 15 years. It was only when he turned 18 years and left care that he started looking for his siblings to “reconnect” with them. He has struggled to form relationships, when he was 16 years old he started dating a Lebanese Muslim girl. Youssif was not familiar with the ‘cultural norms’ around dating and seeking the girl’s parent’s permission. His girlfriend’s family would ask him “who are you?”. It was hard to explain as he had lost his identity when he came into care and was estranged from his biological parents/extended family. Since leaving care Youssif has been actively involved in raising the profile of issues facing migrant children and youth in foster care and has advocated for more support for children and young people in care and leaving care.



Hilda – a young person with European and Asian background and care leaver

Hilda is 20years old, she has mixed heritage, she is part German (Father) and part Filipino (Mother) living in Queensland. She came into care when she was 12years old. Her parents had separated and her mother moved back to the Philippines and her father passed away. She was separated from her siblings and had multiple placements. She was taunted both in care and at school due to her mixed heritage and “found it difficult being different”. None of her caseworkers ever asked her about her culture or heritage and family connections. She would have liked to have been able to maintain her ‘mother tongue’ (Filipino) as no one bothered to help maintain her language. She is now trying to build those connections with her maternal Filipino family.

Hilda stated that: “Identity is important and helps keep kids happy... culture is big part of that”.

Lilly, Jasmine and Wendy – siblings with a Vietnamese background

A sibling group of 3 girls: Lilly (8 years), Jasmine (10 years) and Wendy (15 years), from Vietnamese backgrounds living in Cabramatta (New South Wales). The girls were removed from the parents due to long history of domestic and family violence issues in the home and the girls witnessing and experiencing harm. The girls could speak English, however both parents had very limited English and low level of literacy. As the father was the perpetrator of family violence, the girls started to display aggressive behaviour at school and towards their mother. The mother was very socially isolated with no family support and the girls were removed from her care and placed with Anglo-Australian foster carers [as there were no available Vietnamese foster carers].

The girls faced a number of issues in their placement. Firstly, they were religious and followed Buddhism and they were not linked or able to attend the Buddhist Temple (due to foster carers limited awareness and understanding in supporting them).

The girls experienced significant stigma by the Vietnamese community due to them coming into foster care. As consequence the girls started to “shun” their Vietnamese culture and heritage, or be identified as ‘Vietnamese’. They started to refuse to eat rice and curry. The older girl ‘Wendy’ started ‘self harming’ and was referred to a mental health service with possible diagnosis of ‘Borderline Personality’ and ‘Identity confusion’ as a consequence of coming into care. The mother went back to her family in Vietnam as she ‘felt despair’ at losing her girls and could not cope any longer living in Australia.





Sione – a young person with Samoan background and care leaver

Sione is 20 years old and is from a Samoan Christian background living in Queensland. He was 9 years old when he was removed from his mother's care. He was placed in residential care for 6 months while the Department tried to find an appropriate foster family. He was then placed with an Australian non-Christian family. Sione was disengaged from his culture and religion which caused him to socially isolate himself. His mother's feelings were not considered. Sione feels that the Department should have taken more consideration for his cultural and religious beliefs and should have tried to find an appropriate foster family. Since leaving care, Sione has faced many challenges as he was disconnected from his community and church and failed to maintain his identity as a Samoan young person. This caused a lot of anxiety and mental health issues and him becoming homeless [as he had no connections with family or community].

REFUGEE YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Zina – a young person with a Congolese background and a care leaver

Zina is 18 years old from Congolese background living in South Australia. She came into care from a very young age, due to her father's drinking and family violence issues in the home. She had a number of placements of which some were with Anglo-Australian carers. When she was with Anglo carers, she struggled and missed her traditional African food and would starve herself. Then the Department moved her to be placed with African foster carers who were from Tanzania and could speak 'Swahili', which made it easier for her to maintain her language. The challenges with being placed with 'African carers' was that everyone in the community knew that 'she had come into care' and it was seen as 'shameful' for her and her family (that her parents failed in their parenting skills). Her last placement was in a residential home and she struggled in this set-up, as there was no cultural support planning by her caseworker or the Residential Youth worker. She also experienced lots of racism by the other young people in the Residential home. The other girls wrote on her door 'Go back to your country, Black Bitch' and the youth workers only talked to the other girls, they never got into trouble. This made her very angry and upset and that the system did not recognise her rights or provide 'cultural support for her'. Her step mother has been her main link to her cultural heritage and has told her about 'African community values', getting hair braided, attending cultural events and learning about African marriage/dowry system. Zina has left care now and living with her sister and studying at TAFE, she does not like 'hanging with other African young people as they all 'talk' and prefers her Korean friends. She stated that: 'It's a shame for a kid being in care, I feel out of place, being the only kid in care from that country [Congo], they don't provide cultural support for kids like me.'



USEFUL RESOURCES

Keeping Their Hopes Alive: A Good Practice Guide to case management with Young People from refugee backgrounds (2012). <http://goo.gl/B07teR>

Feedback provided by staff at the Queensland branch of CREATE and a young CALD consultant, identified that for some CALD young people they may "shun their cultural heritage" and not wish to be linked or identified by that culture, especially if some aspects of that culture or religion was used as justification for the abuse. For example 'forced child marriage' in some cultural groups, it is seen as an appropriate way to protect and preserve the young girl's honour and prevent pre-marital sexual relationships. However this practice is now illegal in Australia and a young person may need more support to deal with familial pressures of 'early or forced marriage'.

USEFUL RESOURCES

End Forced Child Marriage Best Practice Guidelines (2013): <http://goo.gl/d89O69>



Joseph – a young person with Ethiopian background and care leaver

Joseph is a 19 year old Ethiopian man living in Victoria. He arrived in Australia when he was 12 years under the Refugee Program. He came into foster care at the age of 11 years old due to his father's drinking/drug use and excessive physical discipline. He was placed with Anglo-Australian carers, as there were no African carers. When he came into foster care he had limited English and his carer struggled to understand him (She would draw pictures to try and explain things to him). Joseph missed his traditional African food and it took him long time to get used to Australian food. For the first 2-3 years the Department or his case worker never asked him about his culture. When he was 15yrs old, the foster care agency linked him with the African community. Before he came into care he could speak Amharic, he lost this language when he came into care. He sees himself as more Australian than 'African or Ethiopian'. Joseph still lives with 'foster carer family and he feels that they are 'his family' and is attending University. He stated that 'There needs to be program which supports young people in care to manage both Australian culture and their own cultural identity'.



Bashir – a young person with Afghani-Hazara background, refugee and Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor (UHM)

Bashir is a 20 year old Afghani-Hazara young man, living in Shepparton (Victoria). Bashir fled Afghanistan in late 2009, when he was 14 years old, travelled by boat and arrived on Christmas Island in 2010. He spent 4 months on Christmas Island while his Refugee Protection Visa was being assessed. Bashir was granted permanent residency in August 2010 and was referred to a UHM program in Shepparton who supported him through his journey to independent living. The UHM program assisted him with finding safe and secure accommodation and connections to the outside community and support through the settlement process. As an Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor, he faced many challenges including, persecution, danger, exploitation, loss of family, uncertainty, an unknown future, risk, language barriers and his concern for his family who continue to live in dangerous conditions in Afghanistan. Bashir works at the local food factory and is continuing his efforts to bring his family to Australia.

UNACCOMPANIED HUMANITARIAN MINORS IN CARE

Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHMs) are young people under 18 years who have arrived in Australia without a parent or relative. The Minister for Immigration is the legal guardian of UHMs who are not in the care of a parent or adult relative 21 years of age or older and are referred to as 'wards'. As at 30 June 2012, there was total of 498 'wards' in the UHM program across Australia. In 2012, the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) released a policy paper on UHMs¹⁵ and identified a number of emerging issues which included:

- UHMs are vulnerable group of young people with diverse and complex needs
- they are struggling with trauma and grief and loss and socially isolated
- they struggle to navigate a complex service system and various guardianship or support arrangements &
- there is a lack of targeted support or transitional care for young people turning 18 years.

A literature review by Barrie & Mendes (2011) of the experiences of UHMs and OOHC in UK and Australia found that there was limited research and awareness in Australia on the experiences of UHMs asylum-seeking children and young people who are placed in OOHC. In an article by Cameron, Frydenberg & Jackson (2012) on young refugees in Australia identified that UHM's are at 'heightened risk of social exclusion and mental illness, grief and loss (p46)... based on their exposure to military involvement, sexual violence, gross deprivation, exploitation and abuse during the pre-flight and flight experiences' (p47).

The Australian government provides funding to Non Government Organisations (NGOs) to provide settlement and support services to UHMs up to the age 18 years. One of these NGO's has been Life Without Barriers (LWB). LWB support to Refugees and Asylum Seekers service provides holistic support to families and unaccompanied young people under the age of 18. Services include support for young people and families in community detention, care and accommodation for young people settling into Australian society, and complex case support for young people, adults and families with additional needs.

In 2013, they launched a report titled "I now call Australia Home. Eight young men and their journey to become part of the Australian community", this publication is a collection of stories from eight young men that LWB has had the privilege of supporting through their journey to become part of the Australian community¹⁶.

¹⁵Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN) Policy Paper: UHMs in Australia: an overview of national support arrangements and key emerging issues (2012); <http://goo.gl/IFzxID>

¹⁶LWB (2013) I now call Australia Home. Eight young men and their journey to become part of the Australian community; <http://goo.gl/Ovsvoz>

CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PRACTICE

“A culturally competent system of care acknowledges and incorporates – at all levels – the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance towards the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge and the adaptation of services to meet culturally-unique needs” (Cross et al, 1989).

AWARENESS

The first step to becoming culturally competent is through self awareness and self reflection, which involves the critical examination and study of one’s own cultural heritage and willingness to learn about other cultures. The process of self reflection enables practitioners to unpack their own internalised beliefs and biases and reflect on how this might impact on their interactions with children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds. Practitioners would need to understand that ‘culture’ is fluid, flexible and dynamic.

KNOWLEDGE

The second stage of becoming culturally competent is to increase knowledge and understanding of working with clients from diverse backgrounds (CALD and refugee). Cultural knowledge implies that practitioners will seek:

- knowledge and understanding of the client’s cultural background (e.g. ethnicity, language, religion, customs and traditions)
- to develop an understanding and awareness of different ‘world views’ of clients from diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds
- understanding of the impact of racism and
- awareness of socioeconomic factors impacting on both CALD and refugee community groups.

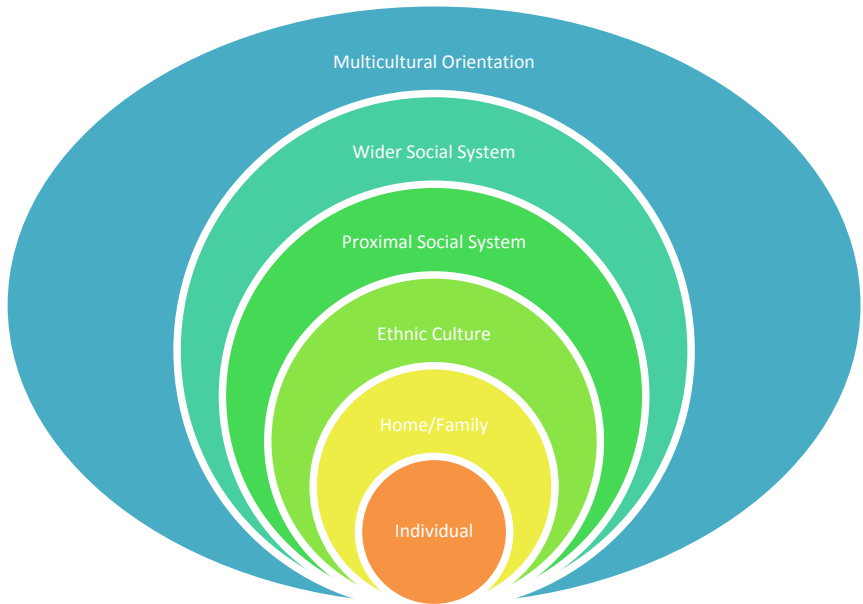
To be culturally competent, practitioners need to develop an understanding and awareness of the different ‘world-views’ of clients from diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and language backgrounds. For example different worldviews or perspectives regarding:

- domestic and family violence (e.g. issues of power and control)
- diverse child rearing practices (e.g. collectivist values vs individualistic values)
- roles of children and young people within the family structure (e.g. mutual cooperation and obedience)
- gender roles within different cultures (e.g. roles defined in the family unit) and
- religious and spiritual beliefs and traditional customs (e.g. Muslim girls wearing hijab or burka and dietary requirements).

In 2005, Lisa Fontes using Bronfenbrenner (1979) Ecological Model of Child Development proposed that a third circle be included for ‘Ethnic culture’ (see diagram below). Fontes highlighted that by including ‘Ethnic Culture’, this allows the practitioner to consider the different ways of working with the:

- child (individually)
- child’s family (kinship)
- religious and cultural/community leaders and
- child’s school and other services.

An ethnic culture subsystem allows the practitioner to consider 'different perspectives' from 'western individual culture' and allow considerations for family, community norms and concerns. This approach allows the practitioner to understand where they fit in the child's ecosystem (particularly when the practitioner maybe of different cultural background to the child and family) and how this will impact on understanding their 'ethnic culture' (p3-4). Adapted from Fontes (2005), Figure 1.1 Ecosystems Framework for Considering Child Maltreatment (p3-4).



Practitioners would need to examine whether their service was culturally appropriate and responsive to meet the needs of CALD or refugee families. For example, newly arrived refugee families may not be familiar with the concept of 'child protection or foster care' and would be reluctant to engage and seek help due to community expectations and 'saving face'. For example in some traditional collectivist cultures, some women may perceive that they have failed in their parental responsibility if they are seen to be seeking outside assistance.

UNDERSTANDING ETHNIC CULTURE



FACTORS INFLUENCING ETHNIC CULTURE

1. FAMILY OF ORIGIN VALUES AND BELIEF SYSTEMS

Research has shown that family of origin play an integral role in shaping and influencing the child's perspective. There are significant differences between Anglo-Australian parenting norms and CALD families of raising their children, these differences include:

- CALD parents holding onto traditional collectivist cultures in which children are raised by the extended family and community
- different perspectives on child developmental timetables and anxiety about children becoming independent
- research has shown that there are distinct gender roles where girls experience more parental control over their behaviours and more household responsibilities and
- migrant and refugee parents who are adjusting to a new country may also experience challenges in being able to support their children in their adjustment and acculturation to the new country.

Practice Tip:

- CALD families may share particular cultural practices, beliefs and values on the basis of common ethnic origins.
- Practitioners need to be mindful that CALD families also have individual features and characteristics and they are not just defined by their race, ethnicity or culture. The basic principle of working with CALD families is inclusion, based on understanding, mutual respect and meaningful communication.

2. CULTURAL IDENTITY & BELONGING

Many CALD families want to pass on their cultural traditional values and beliefs to their children. Culture can influence child rearing practices, communication between parent and child, family roles, status and expectations. In Australia, when CALD families' parenting practices are challenged they may perceive that their core traditional values are being undermined. Practitioners need to demonstrate cultural sensitivity when working with children and young people from CALD or refugee backgrounds who come into OOHHC (e.g. practitioners need to find out about the families culture and migration journey to Australia). For many CALD or refugee parents they fear that their children will lose their culture, language and traditional values and feel unsure about how to stop this from happening. The parents often struggle on how to guide their children in navigating two cultures.

Practice Tip: Practitioners need to find out from the child/young person, what cultural activities they participated in when they were living with their parents, for example:

- Does the child know about their cultural heritage and was that an important part in family of origin?
- Did they attend and participate in music or arts cultural activities?
- Did they attend cultural festivals and participate in traditions (e.g. Chinese New Year)?
- What does 'cultural identity' mean for child/young person?
- Explore cultural maintenance: dress, food, personal items, books, toys, music.

3. RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

Practitioners will need to develop an understanding and an awareness of how the CALD child/young person would like to maintain their religion and spirituality and be supported in their OOHC placement. Practitioners will need to also be mindful where there is not a 'culturally matched placement', of any challenges or issues which can arise from the foster carer having a different religion to the child/young person (e.g. Foster carer from Christian Catholic background and Muslim child in the placement).

Practice Tip: Practitioners will need to:

- Find out whether the child/young person follow any religion? If yes, practitioner needs to familiarise with different religions (for example: Islam, Sikh, Hindu, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism)
- Did the child/young person participate in religious activities and events (for example Eid Festival, Bible class)?
- Does the child wish to maintain any religious observance? (for example If the child is Muslim, they may wish to only eat Halaal meat, attend Mosque and wear the Hijab)
- Find out whether the child/young person has any 'spiritual beliefs' (for example do they have dream time, folk lore stories, values and morals, connection with other people/culture/land).

4. TRADITIONAL FOODS AND COOKING

Practitioners need to find out whether the child/young person has any special dietary requirements. Many children struggle when being placed with foster carer who does not share their cultural heritage and are not able to prepare their traditional foods. In some circumstances some children would starve themselves which would lead to other mental health issues.

Practice Tip: Practitioners will need to find out:

- whether child or young person has any specific dietary need (for example vegetarian diet, gluten free)
- whether the child or young person has any food allergy
- whether the child or young person has religious observance (for example muslim only eat Halaal meat)
- Practitioner will need to record this information and pass onto foster/kinship carer upon placement.

5. CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

Practitioners will need to develop an understanding and awareness of the different 'world-views' of children and young people from diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and language backgrounds who come into OOHC. This will require practitioners to work in a culturally sensitive way and seek information from the family of origin or ethno-specific organisations to gain a better understanding of what the cultural values and beliefs and how this be maintained in the OOHC placement. For example, in some traditional cultures there are strict rules around 'sexual relationships' and pre-marital relationships before marriage. Practitioners should seek advice before discussing sensitive topics related to sex, sexuality, relationship and dating.

KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COLLECTIVIST CULTURES & INDIVIDUALISTIC¹⁷

Collectivist Cultures	Individualistic Cultures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children tend to think in terms of 'we'• Harmony should always be maintained and direct confrontations avoided• Resources should be shared with relatives• Showing sadness is encouraged and happiness is discouraged• People with disabilities are a shame on the family and should be kept out of sight• Rely more on social networks for information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children learn to think in terms of 'I'• Speaking one's mind is a characteristic of an honest person• Individual ownership of resources, even for Children• Showing happiness is encouraged and sadness is discouraged• People with disability should participate as much as possible in normal life.• Prefer researched information from statistics

Information sourced from: 'Cultural Connections' booklet, by Child Australia' (2013), p24.

6. LANGUAGE & BILINGUALISM

Cross cultural communication is critical when working with CALD or refugee families. When engaging with CALD/refugee family for the first time practitioners need to check:

- with client their level of English proficiency & understanding
- if client requires a professional interpreter and the relevant language and dialect.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Good Practise Guidelines for working with interpreters by Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY): <http://goo.gl/6umfTZ>

Many CALD families will speak to their children in their native language at home and will have a desire for their children to be able to continue to speak that language. When a child/young person comes into OOHC, majority of them lose their 'native language' as there has not been a focus or support for the child to continue to speak, learn or practice that language. It is imperative that practitioners prioritise 'language maintenance' and organise or facilitate language classes for children/young people while their brain is developing and they are able to retain their native language.

¹⁷Information sourced from: 'Cultural Connections booklet, Cultural Connections Booklet by Child Australia' (2013), p24: <http://goo.gl/hxXj26>

Practice Tip: Practitioners need to find out:

- What language spoken at home?
- Does the child/young person attend any language schools?
- Any resources for the foster carers to help support and maintain native language.



CULTURAL PRACTICE SKILLS

The third stage of becoming culturally competent practitioner is the development of cultural practice skills. The literature (Kaur, 2009) has identified the following attributes as critical for cultural sensitive practice in child protection and OOHC practice:

- cross cultural communication (use of interpreters)
- respectful engagement with CALD families
- knowledge of diverse child rearing practices and cultural norms
- placing child/young person with kinship or culturally matched placements and
- seeking advice from ethno-specific support services or bi-cultural workers.

In 2013, the Australian Association Social Workers (AASW) revised the Practice Standards¹⁸ which now includes a 'Practice standard 3: Culturally responsive and inclusive practice', where social workers need to work respectfully and inclusively with cultural difference and diversity. The Practice standards outline the following indicators for standard 3 (p11):

- a. demonstrated knowledge of diversity between and within cultures, including ethnicity, and faiths and beliefs
- b. proactively and respectfully promotes the rights of culturally diverse and minority groups in society
- c. demonstrates understanding of the complexity of cultural identities and how this impacts on practice
- d. creatively adapts and modifies practice in order to work effectively and inclusively with people who have different and diverse cultural identities, values, affiliations, beliefs and customs
- e. critical self reflection
- f. recognises and appropriately challenges discriminatory and oppressive practice and policies with respect to culturally diverse people.

In addition, the AASW Code of Ethics (AASW, 2010)¹⁹ stipulates three core values that Social Workers must adhere to: Respect for persons, Social Justice and Professional Integrity. In Section 5.1.2 of the AASW Code of Ethics: 'Culturally competent, safe and sensitive practice' outlines the following guidelines:

1. Social workers will develop culturally sensitive practice by acknowledging the significance of culture in their practice, recognising the impact their own ethnic and cultural identities, views and biases can have on their practice and on culturally different clients and colleagues.
2. Social workers will obtain a working knowledge and understanding of clients' racial and cultural affiliations, identities, values, beliefs and customs, including consultation with cultural consultants, where appropriate.
3. Social workers will recognise and acknowledge the diversity within and among cultures, taking into account individual, family, group and community needs and differences.

This practice guide will assist frontline practitioners to increase their culturally responsiveness and capacity to support CALD and refugee children/ young people who come into OOHC and are placed with foster or kinship carers.

¹⁸AASW Practice Standards (2013): <http://goo.gl/RP76ze>

¹⁹AASW Code of Ethics (2010): <http://goo.gl/sj39by>

SUPPORTING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND BELONGING – WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2010, a priority project was the development of the National Standards in Out of Home Care²⁰. There are 13 standards of which: Standard 10: Children and young people in care are supported to develop their identity, safely and appropriately, through contact with their families, friends, culture, spiritual sources and communities and have their life history recorded as they grow up (p7). Currently child protection departments are only required to develop a 'Cultural Support Plan' for Indigenous children and young people; however future development and measures include Cultural Support Planning for CALD children in OOHC (p24).

USEFUL RESOURCES

In 2008, the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) developed a **'Practice Guide for funded OOHC services on Assessing the needs of CALD children and families in OOHC'**: <http://goo.gl/cCA74t>

HOW TO DEVELOP A CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN

Practitioners can obtain this type of information from:

- child or young person
- departmental caseworker or case files
- family of origin (parents, siblings, relatives, grandparents)
- school and teachers
- ethno-specific services (Migrant Resource Centre and bi-cultural workers) and
- community groups (cultural groups and religious organisation).

²⁰National Standards in Out of Home Care (2011): <http://goo.gl/U2ojkA>

APPENDIX A: CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN CHECKLIST (DETAILED)

Record	Yes	No	More Information
Birth certificate			
Medicare Card or Health Care Card			
Personal Photo's or Life story			
Your Departmental case file			

Practice Tip:

Amongst refugees, asylum seekers, UHM's and UAMS there is a great deal of anxiety, embarrassment, and fear around 'identity documents'. Most arrive here in Australia without any documents at all. A small percentage has intentionally arrived without documents. Even for these children there remains a great deal of fear around conversations that relate to documents of identity. For some children and young people, it will be very difficult to get access to original birth certificate and this may hinder the application for Australian Passport (seek advice from Department of Immigration).

The majority don't have documents for a number of reasons:

- They were never recognised as a citizen of their birth country because they were from a minority race/religion etc and their government refused to give them identity documents for those reasons and there is a great deal of shame attached to that as well as experiences of disconnectedness and loss of a sense of belonging anywhere
- They come from a peasant/village/very poor socio economic background and their parents never had the funds to get documents such as birth certificate, and there is a great deal of shame and embarrassment attached to that.
- Documents were seized/ destroyed (often this included family photographs and memorabilia – very meaningful things) under very violent and terrifying circumstances. Thus there remains a great deal of trauma around 'documents' and memories attached to that.

We need to check the 'assumptions' we make, especially those inherent in our institutional languages and ensure we understand the range of possible meanings for individual children that language may have.

Consider instead how you could engage with a child respectfully and sensitively about records/documents/photos/memorabilia that you may need and at this point and do not have. Consider also that there may be other persons that you could approach for this information and not necessarily the child directly.

Culture	Yes	No	More Information
Do you identify from a Culturally and linguistically Diverse background (e.g. Pacific Islander, Chinese)?			
Do you follow any cultural customs or traditions (dance, music, art)?			
Do you participate in any cultural community activities (e.g. festivals)?			

Practice Tip:

Use language a child would understand (Enter their world and see through their eyes, experience as they would experience in your use of 'language').

Do you identify from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background (e.g. Pacific Islander)? Conversation prompt examples:

- Where do you come from in the world?
- Were you born in this country? Do you remember being little there?
- What was your house like?

Food and dietary requirements:

- What type of food did you used to eat at your parents house?
- Do you have any special dietary requirements (E.g. vegetarian, Halaal meat, and vegan?)
- Would you like to keep eating these foods from your home country?
- What are your favourites? Do you have recipes?
- Do you know how to cook them? Who use to cook these foods for you? Can only mums /dads cook these foods?

Do you follow any cultural customs or traditions (dance, music, art)?

Conversation prompt examples:

- Did you dance when you were little?
- Do you remember who taught you to dance?
- Do you remember if there were special occasions when people danced?
- Were there special occasions when you danced?
- What did you wear when you danced?
- Were there special costumes? What did they look like?
- Do you still like to dance?
- Does anyone in your family play musical instruments? What instrument do they play? Can we find a picture of this instrument?
- Do you remember anyone painting or drawing or working with wood or stone to make beautiful things to look at?
- Do you like doing any of these things?

Practice Tip: continued

Do you participate in any cultural community activities (e.g. festivals)?

Conversation prompt examples:

- Do you know about the festivals from your country that are celebrated here in Australia?
- Have you ever been to any here?
- Who did go with? What kinds of things do you remember about these festivals?
- If you have never been would like you to go sometime? What could you imagine you would like about such festivals?
- Do you remember special days back in your home country when your family celebrated different things?
- Was there special food and guests? Did people dress up?
- What else do you remember?
- Did you like these celebrations? Was there anything you didn't like about these celebrations/days/festivals?

Language:	Yes	No	More Information
Do you speak any language?			
Do you attend a language school?			

Practice Tip:

Conversation prompt examples:

- Do you speak any language?
- What language does your family speak? Can you speak this language?
- Do you like speaking this language?
- How many different languages can you speak?
- Are there some languages you don't like speaking?
- What is your favourite? Do you know why it is your favourite one?
- Could you say your name and how old you are and the most favourite thing in the whole world in your language for me now?
- Do you learn English at school? What is that like? Do you like it?
- Are you learning to speak any other languages? Who is teaching you? Do you like this?

Religion & Spirituality	Yes	No	More Information
Do you follow any Religion?			
Are you linked into any Church/Temple?			
Do you have any religious requirements or observance (e.g. food, dress, prayer)?			
Do you have any Spiritual beliefs?			

Practice Tip:

Conversation prompt examples:

Do you follow any religion?

- Do you know what religion means?
- What religion are you? Do you like being this religion?
- What do you like about this?

Do you have any spiritual beliefs?

- Find out whether the child/young person has any 'Spiritual beliefs'? (E.g. do they believe in dream time, folk lore stories, values and morals, connection with other people/culture/land)

Are you linked into any church/temple?

- Can you tell me anything you might know about temple/church/mosques?
- Have you been to this place before? Who did you go with?
- What did you like or what didn't you like about going to temple/church/mosque?
- Would you still like to go sometimes? Who would you like to go with?
- Did you dress up in special clothes when you went to temple/church/mosque?
- What were these clothes? Did you like dressing up in these clothes?
- Do you have any pictures of yourself/ your family in these clothes?

Do you have any religious requirements or observance (e.g. dress, prayer)?

- Are there special foods you like to eat that come from your home country?
- Are there foods you are not allowed to eat?
- Do you know why you are not allowed to eat these foods?
- Did you and your family say special prayers when you had these foods?
- In your home country did you pray at home?
- Would you like to be able to keep doing that now? How would you do this now?
- Would you need anything at home to be able to do this?

Immigration status	Yes	No	More Information
Australian citizen			
Permanent Resident			
Temporary Resident (e.g. Special Category Visa holder)			
Refugee/Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor (UHM)			
Asylum seeker			

Practice Tip:

Conversation prompt examples:

- What is your Immigration status?
- Do you know what a visa is?
- Have the immigration people given you visa yet?
- Are you still waiting? How long have you have waited now?
- Do you like living here in Australia? What do you like about this?
- What don't you like about this? Are you hopeful that soon you will get a visa?

Refugee/UHM/Asylum seeker (section only)	Yes	No	More Information
Are you linked in with any counselling service (Torture Trauma specific)?			

Practice Tip:

Conversation prompt examples:

- What do you remember about your country (E.g. war/conflict/bombings)?
- Did you have terrible experiences when you lived in your country or on your journey here to Australia?
- What do you remember about these experiences?
- Do you have scary dreams?
- Is someone helping you with this? Who is helping you?
- Would you like someone to help you with this?

Any other Extra-Curricular Activities?	Yes	No	More Information
Do you have any other activities that you wish to be continued or connected to?			

Practice Tip

Conversation prompt examples:

Sport:

- What sports did you like to play when you lived in your home country?
- Would you like to do that here?

Arts/Jewellery/Painting:

- Did you make bracelets or jewellery / dresses/ other things from fabrics with your mum or sisters or other girls and women? What kind were they? Did you like doing this? Would you like to keep doing this? What material would you need?
- Did you make art in your home country? What did you make?
- Would you like to do that here or something like that here?

Music:

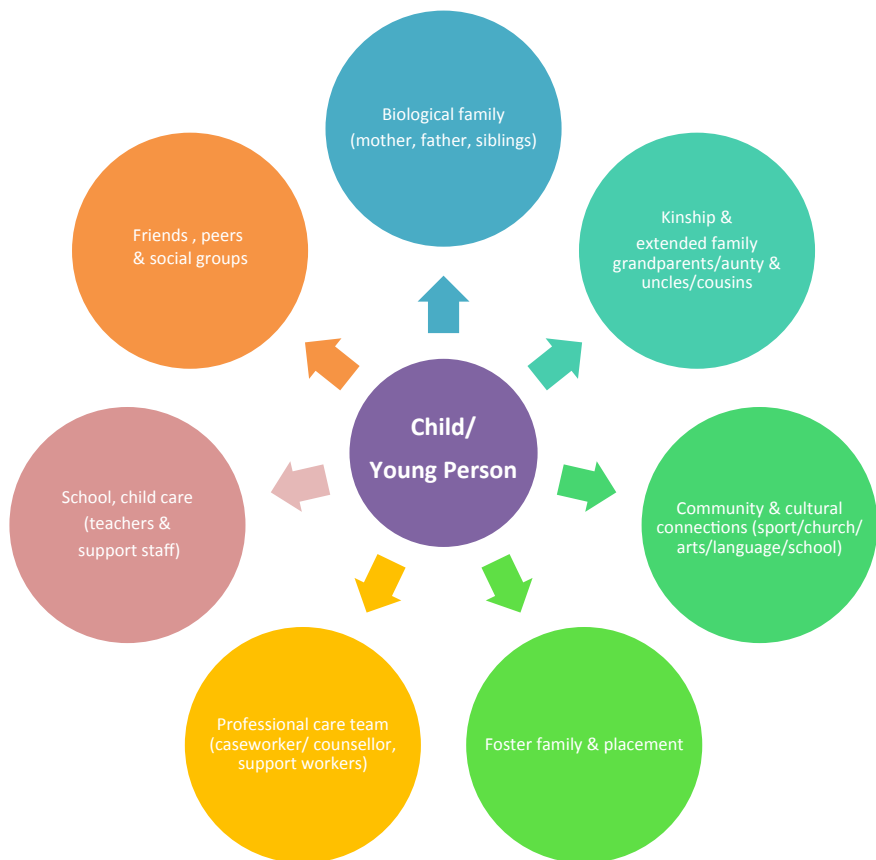
- Did you play any music instrument or participate in music related activities?
- Were you part of choir or singing?

Other Recreational activities:

- Find out what the child or young person did for fun?
- Include a list of possible activities as most children do not know what is possible here. Remember that such social situations as organised group activities and sports can be very challenging in so many different ways for these children and they will need to be accompanied for a short while until they feel comfortable and confident.

APPENDIX B: CHILD FOCUSED CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN

Practitioners should try to understand the child's world view and develop an eco-map of mapping the child or young person's connections.



APPENDIX C: CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN – IDENTITY ACTIVITY

Practitioners should try to understand the child's world view and develop cultural support plan to their developmental level.

My favourite foods
are:

My Name is:

My favourite memory

Favourite thing I like doing:

About my family:

About my culture:

I speak

I like to wear

I like music/dance

APPENDIX D: CULTURAL SUPPORT PLAN CHECKLIST (SIMPLIFIED VERSION)

	Yes	No	More Information
Family of Origin: Do you want to have contact with:			
Parents			
Siblings			
Grandparents			
Aunt or Uncle			
Cousins			
Cultural Identity/Traditions/Customs: Do you want to:			
Participate in Music or Dance activities?			
Participate in Art/Paint/creative activities?			
Attend Cultural or Community festival?			
Participate in Cultural or Traditional customs?			
Learn how to cook traditional food?			
Religion & Spirituality: Do you want to:			
Attend any Church or Religious activities?			
Participate in any Spiritual activities?			
Participate in Religious festivals or classes?			
Language: Do you want to:			
Learn your native language?			
Attend or participate in language school			
Language: Do you want to:			
Connect with other young people from your culture or community?			
Siblings			
Learn about your culture or community?			

Additional notes:

RESOURCES

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) 'Maintaining culture: helping a child retain their cultural connections and identity: Real Kids, Real Carers: A Continuing education resources for foster carers' (2013), <http://goo.gl/weYJCI>

Cultural Connections booklet, Cultural Connections Booklet by Child Australia' (2013), p24: <http://goo.gl/7epxJh>

Centre for Multicultural Youth, Information sheet Refugee and CALD young people: Definitions: <http://goo.gl/rjnt7p>

End Forced Child Marriage Best Practice Guidelines developed (2012): <http://goo.gl/SI3OT7>

Good Practise Guidelines for working with interpreters by Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY): <http://goo.gl/BOzkLP>

Keeping Their Hopes Alive: A Good Practice Guide to case management with Young People from refugee backgrounds (2012): <http://goo.gl/uGhdRj>

NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) developed a 'Practice Guide for funded OOHC services on Assessing the needs of CALD children and families in OOHC' (2008): <http://goo.gl/qd63BZ>

Go Your Own Way Info Kit (2012): <http://goo.gl/WTgts5>

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CREATE Foundation Report Card (2013), accessed online 2 June 2014: <http://goo.gl/SqEYRS>

Factsheet 20-Migration Programme Planning Levels, Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) accessed online 2 June 2014: <http://goo.gl/AS2Aui>

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Life Without Barriers (2013) 'I now call Australia Home. Eight young men and their journey to become part of the Australian community' report: accessed online 2 June 2014: <http://goo.gl/wJbmK5>

Moss, M (2009) 'Broken circles to a different identity: an exploration of identity for children in out-of-home care in Queensland, Australia', Child and Family Social Work, 14, pp311-321.

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Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN) Policy Paper: Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHMs) in Australia: an overview of national support arrangements and key emerging issues (2012) accessed online 2 June 2014: <http://goo.gl/kVa9s4>

National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020, accessed online 2 June 2014: <http://goo.gl/Wxs3DV>

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National Standards in Out of Home Care (2011), accessed online 2 June 2014: <http://goo.gl/0nYr5T>

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LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS has grown from humble beginnings into one of the most significant not-for-profit organisations in Australia, providing care and support services to almost 6000 clients across Australia and in New Zealand. Our services include family support and out-of-home care, disability services, home and community care and support to refugees and asylum seekers. We also work in the areas of mental health, homelessness and youth justice.

Life Without Barriers' family support and out-of-home care services include support to vulnerable families; foster and residential care for children and young people; and child care services in remote communities. Our support to refugees and asylum seekers service includes support for young people and families in community detention; care and accommodation for young people settling into Australian society; and complex case support.

KEY ASSETS (KA) is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation who along with the Core Assets Group (our parent company in the United Kingdom) has a combined experience of over 20 years of delivering intensive out-of-home care fostering services to children and young people from diverse backgrounds across four continents. The success of our approach is a belief that all children and young people in out-of home care deserve the best opportunity to achieve their full potential and those caring for them need to be supported and valued to do this. Key Assets and Core Assets also provides a range of other services including Edge of Care, Parent and Child Placements, Disability Support, Kinship Care, Learning and Organisational Development.

Our Framework, which we call Team Parenting™ is rooted and underpinned by theories associated with child development, culture, attachment and trauma. It is our solid belief that even the most complex of children, with the right inputs and supports, can both live and thrive in family based care and transition to the next stage of their life, whether restoration to family, another placement or transition to adulthood with the skills to succeed.

PEAKCARE QUEENSLAND is a Queensland child protection peak body. PeakCare has 60 member agencies, which are a mix of small, medium and large, local and state-wide, mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-government organisations that provide family support, child protection, and out-of-home care services (eg. foster and kinship care, residential care) to children and young people who are at risk of entry to, or in, the statutory child protection system and their families. PeakCare has an additional 16 members who are individuals and other entities supportive of PeakCare's policy platform relating to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and the support of their families.

JK DIVERSITY CONSULTANTS Specialist Social Worker working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. Services offered: Policy, Advocacy, Research, Evaluation, Psy-Social Assessments and Training for NGO's, Government, Business and community groups.

